BLOCK ISLAND UTILITY DISTRICT
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Meeting of the Board of Utility Commissioners
Thursday, July 23, 2026 @ 4:00 PM

THE MEETING WAS HELD AT THE TOWN HALL

In attendance: Board Members Barbara MacMullan, Chair, Ken Lacoste, Secretary, Tom Risom, Treasurer.
Absent: Mary Jane Balser, John O'Riordan

Others in attendance: Jeffery Wright, President, Tracy Fredericks, James Stockman, Evan Carey, Tom Risom, Tom Durden, David Lewis, Chris Warfel.

Barbara MacMullan called the meeting to order at 4:00pm

1. **Public Input**
    a) Entech Engineering Correspondence: Microgrid Study

    Chris Warfel asked NREL if he could get a copy of the draft report to review before the final report, which he planned to share with the BIUD board and the Town Council. Ken Lacoste said he was surprised that they would do that before the final report is out.

    Chris Warfel didn't realize that his request to revisit the exploration and reporting of the capabilities of the Smart Meter hardware and software to deliver more granular information for near real-time hourly data was added to the agenda. Chris Warfel then asked if the power company could adopt a policy to acknowledge received communications like this one.

2. **Commissioner's Report**
    a) Appoint Voting Delegate and Alternate for NRECA Regional Meeting

    Jeff Wright reported that currently Barbara MacMullan and Tom Risom are the voting delegates. Discussion occurred and it was decided they would appoint the voting delegates when they have a chance to check with John O'Riordan to see if he is available and interested.

3. **Review NRECA Member Satisfaction Survey**

    Jeff Wright thanked Mike Sassman from NRECA for taking the time via zoom to report on the results of the member satisfaction survey. Jeff Wright reported that this is the second one performed, and this presentation is included in the board packet.

    Jeff added that offering this survey every three years should be adequate enough.

Mike Sassman reported that the survey was conducted in April of this year. The surveys were collected through invitations sent to members with email addresses on file and by providing members with a QR code that would provide access to the survey. Mike reported that 73% of the emails were opened, 149 surveys were completed, 128 were done online and 21 through the QR code.

Mike Sassman discussed the details of the survey as shown in the presentation included in the meeting packet. The results showed a higher ACSI score than the previous survey done in 2023

Questions:
Tom Risom asked how member loyalty is defined.
Mike Sassman responded that it is a level of loyalty to the organization, including interacting with the organization cooperating if the cooperative was seeking their assistance. He also said it reflects an emotional connection with the organization, if the member scored higher on loyalty, they were more likely to identify as a utility district member as opposed to just a customer, i.e., they have a vested interest in the utility district.

Jeff Wright added that the employees should be very proud of this survey. He also suggested we work on improving our communication with members regarding the 2.5% rate increase to meet the RI renewable energy strategy. He also stressed that communication is the key to membership satisfaction.

4. **Receive Public Comment and Review and Act Upon By-Law Change re: Annual Meeting Date**

Jeff Wright reported that the Annual meeting date in the By-Laws is set to be on a Saturday. Barbara MacMullan suggested we change this by setting the date at the beginning of the year when we do the annual board meeting calendar or we set it for a specific month. Discussion ensued that a Saturday in August does not seem to work any longer since attendance was down. Jeff Wright suggested we try September and see how it goes, if it is a flop we can go back to changing the bylaws. Jeff mentioned that we do have a date available in September to hold the meeting outside, under the tent at Champlin's, where there is ample parking and we can offer food and a cash bar. Under the current bylaws, we have to do a 60-day notice which would mean the date would have to be September 24th.

Tom made a motion to change the by-laws to reflect a 45-day notice requirement rather than 60 days and that the date will be determined when the calendar is set at the beginning of the year. Motion was seconded by Barbara. No further discussion the motion passed unanimously.

Tracy Fredericks reported that she spoke with the manager at Champlin's and the tent area is available for that date. She will get more details on the space and pricing.

Barbara made a motion that we set the annual meeting date to be

September 24th at 4 o'clock. The motion was seconded by Ken Lacoste. No further discussion. Voted 3-0.
This motion was withdrawn.

Barbara made a new motion that we set the annual meeting date to be either September 17th or September 24th at 4 o'clock. The motion was seconded by Ken Lacoste. Voted 3-0

5. **Review and Act Upon Meeting Minutes: March 26, April 23, May 28, June 10, 2026.**
   Barbara asked that she be responsible to proofread the meeting minutes since Jeff doesn't consistently have the time to review them. Barabara noted there were no substantiative changes to be made.

   Tom Risom made a motion to accept the meeting minutes based on those minor changes. The motion was seconded by Barbara MacMullan. Voted 3-0

6. **Review of the 2025 Strategic Plan**
   Jeff and Barbara agreed to work on an article in the BI Times to discuss the rate case. Jeff reported that the Dave Bebyn completed the rate case was completed to reflect the most recent data, and that the rate increase has not changed, and is still what the board approved. Jeff suggested that Mary Shekarchi provide the rate case for the board to review then he and Barbara will work on the article for the Block Island Times.

   No other items from the strategic plan were discussed.

7. **Treasurer's Report**
   Tom Risom gave his report, included in the packet, saying all the metrics are good and the cash on hand is finally coming back. Tom added that our line losses continue to decline.

   Jeff reported that the line of credit balances are $600,000 for operating and $150,000 for fuel. The fuel line of credit balance will be paid off next month and we should also be able to reduce the operating line of credit as well. Jeff reported that this is normal for this time of year when our revenue from sales is still low.

   Jeff reported that all vendors are paid with the exception of ENE and RI Energy, and added that our financial condition is better than last year.

   Jeff offered if anyone wants to see the treasure's monthly packet, which is substantial, they are free to do so.

8. **President's Report**
   Voltage Conversion -Jeff reported that we continue to make progress on the voltage conversion.

   Pole Replacements-More pole replacements have also been done to help with the conversion. Jeff Wright added that we need to replace approximately 100 poles/year

in order to stay on track.

July 4th Reliability -Our reliability over the 4th of July weekend was great; we have had zero issues for the past two years. This is notable because it was a hot and very busy weekend and we hit our peak load of 6.1 MW on July 3 at 7pm. Jeff noted that he looked at the ETIPP demand forecast and this data fits with their findings. Jeff added that as demand continues to increase, the system may require another voltage conversion which would require changing all transformers.

RI-Renewable Energy Standard- Jeff reported that Craig Kieney will put together a summary of the RI Renewable Energy Standard changes the power supply committee to review. This summary will be discussed at the August meeting.

CFO-Recruitment- The CFO position recruitment has gotten some applicants. if a suitable candidate is found, we could have a new CFO by the beginning of next year.

Member Service Representative Job Posting-Jeff Wright reported that we reposted the member service representative position to deemphasize the accounting side of the job description.

9. **Entech Engineering: Request to revisit the exploration and reporting of the capabilities of the Smart Meter hardware and software to deliver more granular information for near real-time hourly data.**

Chris Warfel sent an email (in the meeting packet) asking for permission to discuss with the metering manufacturer and software company the capabilities of our metering with the hope that it would be able to provide additional capabilities.

Jeff noted that everyone has a copy of the email, but he could read it if he felt it was necessary. Chris Warfel responded that it was fine however we wanted to do this.

Barbara MacMullan suggested that Jeff summarize what he thinks Chris is asking for and then we can have that discussion.

Jeff Wright offered that Chris is asking for a few different things. 1. Chris is asking to talk with our Smart Hub administration, which is inappropriate. 2. Chris is looking for some more capabilities out of our SmartHub/metering system. Jeff noted that our meter system is the most sophisticated you can get and there's only so much information that you can get out of the meter as the power flow through it. In the past Chris may have had requests for more information behind the meter, if the flow doesn't go through the meter we cannot measure it.

Currently the information we get is 5-minute interval data including demand, power factor and the delivery both ways. Jeff and Tracy can access more information on any individual meter through software in the office. This information is not available to everyone for security reasons and because it also contains sensitive member information.

The hardware meter system we have is a good system manufactured by Trilliant. Trilliant supplies the meter data to us.

The Smarthub software is a simplified version of the information where the customer can see their usage on a daily, hourly or monthly basis. They can also use the software to pay their bills, get notifications about outages and other information if they choose. This information is available to any member who signs up for a SmartHub account.

Chris explained that he is asking if it is it possible to get more granular information on Smarthub? And if there is an instruction booklet on SmartHub?

Tracy Fredericks responded that there is a great deal of information on how to use SmartHub both online and within the software.

Jeff and Tracy both offered to help with specific questions he may have using the software.

10. **Update on Employee Housing Project Review**

Jeff reported that he spoke with Mary Jane, she will be siting the building plans on the corner lot with the DiPrete plans.

Tom Brown has been working on cleaning and painting the house on Center Rd. We are waiting on plumbers to come in, and we will be installing mini-splits on the 1st floor. We will have CTM install new cabinets and floors along with foundation repairs and repairing the back deck.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Barbara MacMullan, seconded by Ken. Voted 3-0. The meeting was adjourned at 5:36 pm.